AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of finish processing a set of output media, comprising:

receiving a first finishing instruction corresponding to a first finishing operation associated with the set of output media; ~~and,~~

based on a determination to process the set of output media by other than the first finishing operation, substituting a second finishing instruction corresponding to a second finishing operation for the first finishing instruction; and,

applying the second finishing operation such that a mark indicative of the first finishing operation is placed on at least one of the set of output media or a slipsheet placed relative to the set of output media in a location indicative of where the first finishing operation is to be performed.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

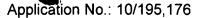4. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A method ~~as set forth in claim 1~~of finish processing a set of output media, comprising:

receiving a first finishing instruction corresponding to a first finishing operation associated with the set of output media; and,

based on a determination to process the set of output media by other than the first finishing operation, substituting a second finishing instruction corresponding to a second finishing operation for the first finishing instruction, wherein the second finishing operation is selected from a collating process, a registration process, a binding process, a cutting process, a hole forming process, and an abstract finishing process.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A method ~~as set forth in claim 5~~of finish processing a set of output media, comprising:

receiving a first finishing instruction corresponding to a first finishing operation associated with the set of output media;

based on a determination to process the set of output media by other than the first finishing operation, substituting a second finishing instruction corresponding to a second finishing operation for the first finishing instruction; and,

applying the second finishing operation to the set of output media, wherein the applying ~~step further~~ comprises:

placing a slipsheet relative to the set of output media indicative of where a finishing operation is to be performed; and,

-marking the slipsheet with information including the first finishing instruction.

7.   (Currently Amended)   The method as set forth in claim ~~5~~6, wherein the ~~applying step further comprises~~ marking includes marking the slipsheet with a human-readable description of the first finishing instruction.

8.   (Currently Amended)   The method as set forth in claim ~~5~~6, wherein the ~~applying step further comprises~~ marking includes marking the slipsheet with a machine-readable description of the first finishing instruction.

9.   (Currently Amended)   ~~The~~ A method ~~as set forth in claim 2~~of finish processing a set of output media, comprising:
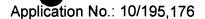
receiving a first finishing instruction corresponding to a first finishing operation associated with the set of output media;

based on a determination to process the set of output media by other than the first finishing operation, substituting a second finishing instruction corresponding to a second finishing operation for the first finishing instruction; and,

applying the second finishing operation to the set of output media, wherein the applying step comprises marking the set of output media with information including the first finishing instruction.

10.   (Currently Amended)   A method of processing a print job using abstract finishing comprising:

receiving the print job, said print job including one or more desired finishing instructions and job content distinct from the finishing instructions, said job content being that portion of the print job which is to be printed on one or more individual sheets of output media;

generating a marker representing at least one of the desired finishing instructions; and,

placing the marker at a selected location relative to the print job, said marker being placed on the same output media as the job content.

11. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein the generating step comprises:

converting the desired finishing instruction into a human-readable description of the desired finishing instruction; and,

marking the human-readable description of the desired finishing instruction on a slipsheet.
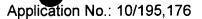
12. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein the generating step comprises:

converting the desired instruction into a machine-readable description of the desired finishing instruction; and,

marking the machine-readable description of the desired finishing instruction on a slipsheet.

13. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein individual sheets of output media each comprise a printed area and a border area, and the placing step comprises placing the marker on the border area of the individual output media.

14. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein individual sheets of output media each comprise an area for job content, and the placing step comprises placing the marker on the area for job content.

15. (Currently Amended) The A method as set forth in claim 10of processing a print job using abstract finishing comprising:

receiving the print job including desired finishing instructions;

generating a marker representing at least one of the desired finishing instructions; and,

placing the marker at a selected location relative to the print job, wherein the desired finishing instruction includes inserting additional media at a selected location relative to the print job, and the placing step comprises inserting the marker as a placeholder for the additional media.
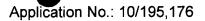
16.   (Original)   The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein the placing step comprises inserting a marker at compilation boundaries within the print job.

17.   (Currently Amended)   A printing system comprising:

a user interface for supplying the printing system with data including a desired finishing instruction;

a finishing element which applies a finishing operation to a print job; and,

a processor in communication with the user interface and the finishing element, said processor determining compatibility between the finishing element and the desired finishing instruction, and upon determining incompatibility, selecting a compatible finishing instruction for the finishing element, wherein said selected compatible finishing instruction is supplied to the finishing element such that the finishing operation includes marking the print job with the desired finishing instruction.

18.   (Original)   The printing system as set forth in claim 17, wherein the processor substitutes the selected compatible finishing instruction for the desired finishing instruction.

19.   (Original)   The printing system as set forth in claim 17, wherein the processor determines user preference regarding the selected compatible finishing instruction.

20.   (Currently Amended)   ~~The~~ A printing system ~~as set forth in claim 17~~comprising:

a user interface for supplying the printing system with data including a desired finishing instruction;

a finishing element which applies a finishing operation to a print job; and,

a processor in communication with the user interface and the finishing element, said processor determining compatibility between the finishing element and the desired finishing instruction, and upon determining incompatibility, selecting a compatible finishing instruction for the finishing element, wherein the finishing operation applied by the finishing element is selected from a collating process, a registration process, a binding process, a cutting process, a hole forming process, and an abstract finishing process.